

Message Text

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SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 FRB-01 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15

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FM AMCONSUL HALIFAX

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 966

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

UNCLAS HALIFAX 57

EO 11652 NA

TAGS PINT CA

SUBJECT: SPEECH IN HALIFAX BY FEDERAL OPPOSITION LEADER

ROBERT STANFIELD

1. PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION LEADER ROBERT STANFIELD ADDRESSED PARTY MEETING IN HALIFAX FEBRUARY 20 DIRECTING HIS REMARKS TO MATTERS OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO ATLANTIC PROVINCES.

2. STANFIELD SAID THAT INACTION ON PART OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS CAUSED ENERGY SITUATION TO WORSEN. HE SAID NATION STILL DOES NOT HAVE COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL ENERGY POLICY. EXPLORATION WITHIN CANADA IS DECREASING WITH DRILLING RIGS BEING MOVED TO OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD. STANFIELD SAID GOVERNMENT HAS LOUSED UP PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE OIL SOURCES IN CANADA AND HAS THUS BEEN FORCED TO CURTAIL OIL EXPLORATION.

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EM STANFIELD SAID THAT CANADIANS FACE AN INCREASE IN

PRICE PAID FOR CRUDE OIL WHEN CURRENT ONE-PRICE AGREEMENT EXPIRES LATER THIS YEAR. PENDING OIL PRICE INCREASES PARTICULARLY HARD ON ATLANTIC PROVINCES BECAUSE OF THEIR DEPENDENCE ON OIL TO GENERATE ELECTRICITY. NOTING THAT UP TO NOW OTTAWA HAS BEEN SUBSIDIZING THE PRICE OF IMPORTED OIL FROM THE EXPORT TAX PLACED ON CANADIAN-PRODUCED OIL SOLD TO THE UNITED STATES, HE SAID THAT IN FUTURE THE GOVERNMENT WILL NO LONGER BE ABLE TO DO THIS TO SAME EXTENT AND WILL HENCE SEEK HIGHER PRICE FOR CANADIAN PRODUCED OIL.

4. STANFIELD ALSO CRITICIZED THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR FAILING TO REACH AGREEMENT WITH QUEBEC AND ATLANTIC PROVINCES ON OFFSHORE MINERAL RIGHTS JURISDICTION. HE SAID HIS PARTY'S POSITION CLEAR, NAMELY, THAT ALL BENEFITS OF UNDERSEA DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD GO TO THE PROVINCES WHOSE COASTLINES ARE INVOLVED WITH EXCEPTION OF ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER OUT-OF-POCKET COSTS TO BE BORNE BY FEDERAL TREASURY.

5. THE GOVERNMENT'S LACK OF A SUITABLE TRANSPORTATION POLICY ALSO WAS ATTACKED BY STANFIELD. HE SAID "HIGH-BLOWN" TRANSPORTATION POLICIES OFFERED BY LIBERALS DURING LAST ELECTION CAMPAIGN SHELVED INDEFINITELY. IN MEANTIME, FREIGHT RATES HAVE GONE UP AND THE LESS-THAN-CARLOAD RATE WITHDRAWN, CAUSING SPECIAL HARDSHIP IN ATLANTIC PROVINCES.

6. STANFIELD CLAIMED THAT COUNTRY IS NOT GETTING LEADERSHIP AND STRAIGHT TALK FROM TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT. HE SAID CONFIDENCE CANNOT GROW IN ATMOSPHERE WHICH GOVERNMENT HAS CREATED. GREAT CHALLENGE FACING GOVERNMENT IN 1975 IS TO GENERATE CONFIDENCE. MANBEY

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